

Fresno, California. 2013.

I am Fresno

I am the high school kid that can't wait to get out of this town,
there's nothing to do here, nothing every happens, waiting
for that last summer, before heading out of town.

I am the kid just back from college, moving back in with mom
and dad, trying to find a job now that schools over. Back home
now, taking down old posters from the wall and putting up diplomas.

I am the couple that just bought their first house, a fixer upper,
yard golden from too much sun, their three year old walking up the steps,
paint still on dads pants from the bedroom he just finished.

I am fields of vines, grapes growing in a vast gree, raisins drying
on brown paper, strawberries just plucked from the field.

I am moving north, new buildings, restaurants, glass and plastic
meeting not so far from the river, a hail of lights and traffic.

I am coming back downtown, dusting off the concrete and brick,
old restaurants that have been there for years, new again.

I am new business, sprouting, and food trucks, turning up
like flowers over asphalt.

I am a softball player, mitt clenched tightly, a wrestler alone
on a mat, a stadium of waving red.

I am a long line of poets, words spreading through culture,
through time, through classrooms, through books.

I am the owner of a championships, of Pulitzer, Oscars,
Tonys, struggling to win just one more thing.

I am noticing myself, finally.

I am at a family barbeque and all the children there share
the same last name, the same blood, and all have different
shades of skin, my father by the pool, speaking Spanish
to my daughter, his aged brown hand running through her wispy
blonde hair.

I am a bowl of Pho for breakfast, the noodles warm,
broth like a hug, meat tender and fresh.

I am Lula kabobs for lunch, the spice just behind
the tongue, pilaf golden and perfect.

I am sitting at the dinner table, rolling a hot dog
into a corn tortilla, boiled beans and white rice,
the air growing smokey from the tri tip barbequing
outside, my cousin bringing in a plate of pan fried
noodles from the place down the street.

I am home.

I am Fresno.